



# M E D I A   R E L E A S E

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
TEMA  
TENNESSEE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
SEPT. 8, 2014

TEMA MEDIA CENTER  
(615) 741-0482

## **TAKE INITIATIVE TO SAVE YOUR LIFE IN AN EMERGENCY**

### *STATE PROMOTES SEPTEMBER AS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MONTH*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – There are dangers in everyday living that can become life-threatening without warning. How you prepare to handle those emergencies can mean the difference between being a survivor, or a victim. September is National Preparedness Month and state government is doing what it can to prepare itself and Tennesseans.

With September designated as national emergency preparedness month, the Tennessee Departments of Health, Military and Safety and Homeland Security are urging residents to plan now for what they would need to do in the event of an emergency, and to have a kit of materials to take care of themselves and their families.

“Preparedness is a state of mind; an attitude really,” David Purkey, Deputy Commissioner of TEMA and Homeland Security Advisor, said. “Our efforts are greatly amplified when the public does their part to be prepared by having a plan for emergencies.”

### **Know What to Do**

A recent EF-3 tornado in East Tennessee illustrates the point of knowing what you should do when a warning is sounded. There were no fatalities despite the strong tornado hitting a relatively populated area. The state also mobilized a debris taskforce – composed of state workers from the Department of Transportation and troopers from the Highway Patrol, and members of the National Guard – to assist communities that needed help cleaning up from the storm.

“Regular citizens and local governments can take steps to prepare themselves, and that lets TEMA and the state’s first responders help those that need help more urgently,” Tennessee’s Adjutant General Major General Max Haston said. “The role of the individual cannot be overestimated in a community.”

### **Communication to the Public**

When emergencies happen, clear communications is vital to protecting the public. Tennessee experienced that first-hand during a fungal meningitis outbreak. That experience led TEMA to develop partnerships with the Department of Health and Middle Tennessee State University to ensure the state’s ability to provide emergency information to the public.

(-MORE-)



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
TEMA  
TENNESSEE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
SEPT. 8, 2014

TEMA MEDIA CENTER  
(615) 741-0482

"The creation of the Multi-Agency Joint Information Center at TEMA is a sign of our commitment to informing the public as quickly and thoroughly as possible," Health Commissioner John Dreyzehner, M.D., MPH, said. "In collaboration with the Tennessee Public Television Council and MTSU, this state-of-the-art communications facility will allow TEMA and other state agencies to reach the public with crucial information."

"MTSU is honored to be a part of this partnership with the Department of Health and TEMA to make our satellite uplink available if needed during emergencies," MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee said. "This will ensure that state officials can communicate with all of our citizens in a timely manner in the event of a large-scale emergency or disaster situation."

#### **Other notable Preparedness partnerships:**

- The Governor's Children's Cabinet will feature family preparedness tips on the website, [www.kidcentraltn.com](http://www.kidcentraltn.com).
- Walgreens will hold an in-store preparedness event in Chattanooga on Sept. 17.
- Tennessee Public TV Stations will air unique preparedness programming and a ReadyTN spot featuring Tennessee's first lady.
- Tennessee's First Responders Recognition Ceremony will be held on Sept. 11.

#### **Make a Plan, Have a Kit**

Plans should include where to meet if a home is destroyed and include a list of important personal information, including medical information, for every family member. The website, ReadyGov, has fill-in-the-blank plans available to make it easy to assemble most of the information you would need for your personal emergency plan.

Important personal information should be in your emergency preparedness kit, but contents may vary from individual to individual and family to family. However, there are some items that should be in every kit: Battery-powered or crank radio and a weather alert radio with extra batteries for both; a first aid kit; sanitary wipes; a dust mask; water for both drinking and sanitation; waterproof matches and/or a butane lighter; a crank flashlight; plastic sheeting; non-perishable food to last at least three days; disinfectants; and appropriate medications.

For a more thorough list of supply items for individuals and families, download TEMA's **ReadyTN** smartphone application at [www.tnema.org/ReadyTN](http://www.tnema.org/ReadyTN).

"National Preparedness Month is about encouraging individuals and families to plan for emergency situations. It's also about recognizing those law enforcement officers and first responders who are prepared every day to risk their lives for you and me," Safety & Homeland Security Commissioner Bill Gibbons said. "Their daily sacrifice to the citizens of Tennessee does not go unnoticed," he added.

###